

NUTRITION

Nutrition: Tips for Improving Your Health

Good nutrition is one of the keys to good health. This means making sure you regularly eat foods that have a lot of vitamins and minerals in them, as well as foods that are not high in fat. It is also important to consume calcium to make your bones strong. For most people, foods that are high in fiber are a good choice, and almost everyone should eat several fruits and vegetables every day.

Do I need to change what I eat?

If you answer yes to any of the following questions, you may need to talk about nutrition with your doctor:

1. Has your doctor talked with you about a medical problem or a risk factor, such as high blood pressure, diabetes or high cholesterol?
2. Did your doctor tell you that this condition could be improved by better nutrition?
3. Do diabetes, cancer, heart disease or osteoporosis run in your family?
4. Are you overweight, or have you gained weight over the years?
5. Do you have questions about what kinds of foods you should eat or whether you should take vitamins?
6. Do you think that you would benefit from seeing a nutritionist? (A nutritionist is a registered dietitian who specializes in nutrition counseling.)

Nutrition Tips

- Eat five or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day.
- Decrease the amount of fat that you consume.
- Always make sure that whole grains, fruits and vegetables make up the bulk of your meals.
- Make small, slow changes, instead of trying to make large, fast changes. Small changes will be easier to make and stick with.
- Every few days, keep track of your food intake by writing down what you ate and drank that day. Use this record to help you see if you need to eat more from any food groups, such as fruits, vegetables or dairy products.

